



Public Comments from March 8 Community Forum

At the Community Forum on Tuesday, in addition to spoken comments and questions gathered by note takers, we received seven of the blue "We Want to Hear From You" forms. They begin on page 5.

Summary of Community Forum Comments and Questions

(Note taker: Scott Dvorak)

Comment (Pam Johnson): I would like to know the breakdown of rental vs. owner occupied, as well as the number of affordable units planned for the housing portion of the development.

Bruce Lorig responds: There will be about 400 apartments and 80 condominiums. There could be up to 100 condos, which would then decrease the number of apartments. 20 to 30 percent of the apartment units are planned to be affordable.

Comment: You mentioned that there will be some retail in the commons....

Bruce Lorig responds: About 40 to 50,000 square feet of retail. It would be neighborhood oriented. We prefer to have this type of retail rather than a larger signature retail component. We tried to get a supermarket, but at this point that doesn't look like it is going to happen. There maybe some restaurants.

Comment: What is the nature of the extension of Northgate Mall that was mentioned? What retailers will be in the new space?

Bruce Lorig responds: We understand that there will be 100,000 square feet of new retail space constructed on the west side of Northgate Mall in five to six separate buildings. Construction will be completed in March 2006**. Simon, the Mall owner/manager, has not identified who they are negotiating with as possible tenants.

Comment (Fred Utevski): What is happening about the lack of sidewalks along First Avenue.

Tony Mazzella responds: We are looking at sidewalk needs along arterials and important local roads. First Avenue has been identified as a critical connection. We are paying close attention.

Q: What does that mean?

Tony Mazzella responds: We are developing a plan that will detail what gets done when.

Jackie Kirn responds: Simon will develop a sidewalk on 1st between 103rd and about 105th as part of their development. A place where there is only a beaten path now along First Avenue.

Comment: There is a need for sidewalks on 8th NE as well south of Northgate Way.

Tony Mazzella responds: We will look at 8th as well. We've preliminarily identified that street as a bike route as well.

Comment (Stakeholder Janet Way): We've spoken at earlier meetings about doing a poll of folks at the last forum. How can we take advantage of that idea? How can we get people's opinions?

Tony Mazzella responds: The CTIP is broken in to phases. Each phase has a milestone component. We plan to get input from the group at each milestone. CTIP has an interactive web page that can be used for this purpose. We can speak later and talk about that more specifically.

Comment: When are getting a library and community center? The park area off 8th Avenue NE needs maintenance.

Tim Motzer of Parks responds: First bids came in were all too high. Second bids came in more inline. Contract awarded today. Site preparation begins on Friday. Construction begins soon. Because the bids were within our budget we were able to retain several items that had been identified as "optional". Those include \$100,000 of interior improvements, a play area, a system to allow us to retain storm water for our ongoing irrigation needs.

Janet Way responds: I represent the Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund. We've been working on projects for Park #6 for over 10 years. Some improvements have been made, but it needs a lot more work - better community involvement, better community access. Channel improvements at Northgate will improve water quality, which could in turn help to bring life back to the stream even as far as Park #6.

Comment (Gloria Butts):

- There are good things happening on Fifth Avenue. Yet Simon has decided to build on the other side of Northgate.
- The City and County need to step up to the plate and find the parking needed here. With all the development and transit stations being developed here, I'm afraid that we are simply not building enough parking.
- Tony has been working hard on the CTIP, but what decade will that stuff get built? Tony needs to add the word "gridlock" to his vocabulary. Because that is what we have around here.
- I'd like to address the width of the sidewalk in Northgate Commons. Hopefully the stakeholders won't request/require a sidewalk that is too wide to the detriment of water quality in the stream.
- Keep working hard to get pedestrian pathways everywhere throughout Northgate.

Comment (Lloyd Weatherford): We support raising the height limit as proposed. We have questions about the proposed parking reductions. What can you tell me about the assumptions made in the parking demand models you have supplied?

Bruce Lorig responds: We believe 80% of the apartments will have a car. The condos will have 1.5 cars each. Residential parking needs are in the evening. During the day, retail will need some spaces, but we will still have about 100 excess spaces. We could make those available to Metro to rent on a monthly basis to transit commuters. In the evening, the residents will be back in there spaces but we will have a need for some spaces for the restaurants on the site. We could use some of the Metro Transit Center parking to satisfy those needs.

Comment (Lloyd Weatherford): I heard you say "hopefully." Once the light rail and monorail are tied in here there will be a need for additional parking. I don't think we will have enough parking. Therefore we are opposed to reducing the parking requirements on the site.

Comment (Dan Stearn): What is your estimate for the number of residents on the site?

Bruce Lorig responds: Five hundred units. 1.33 to 1.5 people per unit for about 750 on the high end. That's in our development. ERA Care is developing an assisted living facility on the SE corner of the property with about 150 people for a estimated total of 800 people.

Comment (Bunny Hirschmann): Thank you to all the stakeholders for all the work and time you have put in to this. Stakeholders have commented on the

Simon proposal at an earlier meeting. Will there be another opportunity to comment on their developing plans?

Scott Kemp of DPD responds: Yes there will be another comment opportunity when Simon applies for their Master Use Permit which we believe will be in another month or two.

Comment (Gloria Butts): We need more PR about what is happening around here! What about the art work and artists? Can they be working with ERA Care and others on the project now?

Benson Shaw responds: I'm writing the arts plan. It's in draft form now and will be going to the Public Art Committee next week and then available to the public soon after that. The plan is a framework for guidance in developing public art for the area. I've inventoried existing resources. There are over 30 pieces already, some dating back to the 1930s. My other task is to provide an artwork for the channel project in the Northgate Commons property. That is still in the conceptual phase.

Comment by Stakeholder Janet Way:
Will you be contracting with other artists?

Benson Shaw responds: The art plan will not dictate specifically what art to purchase or which artists to hire. It is just a framework. Public agencies are required to have art budgets for their projects and this plan will guide their purchases and hires, but not require any specific purchase or hire. It will identify resources for them to use.

Stakeholder Barbara Maxwell responds: Maple Leaf Community Garden needs continued support and help - they are still in need of nearly 3500 hours of volunteer time.

Stakeholder Ron Posthuma responds: In response to earlier comments about parking, King County Metro is looking to develop shared parking agreements with Lorig and Simon as all projects, private and transit, move forward.

Comment: Will the project be LEED certified? [LEED = Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.]

Richard Loo of Lorig responds: The architects, Mithun, have other projects that are LEED certified. They are very sensitive to those issues. However, we will probably not apply for LEED certification. We will use sensible building practices.

Comment: Will the library be LEED certified?

Tim Motzer of Seattle Parks & Recreation responds: The library/community center will be LEED certified. And because the bids came in within budget, we may go for a Silver Certification.

Comment by Stakeholder Barbara Maxwell: We just wanted to acknowledge that we are disappointed, given all the things going in the area, that Simon has chosen to redevelop the Northgate Mall on its western side. But as the owners of the property, that is their choice.

Written Comments

► (Bill Barber) I am concerned about the City's plan to turn the Park & Ride on 5th Ave NE into a park.

1. The City needs its Park & Ride lots to promote transit use.
2. This particular lot saves users five minutes twice daily in comparison to driving to the South Lot.
3. Elimination the lot will add 90% of its users as vehicular traffic along 5th Ave NE and along 103rd St. at peak hours, a very undesirable result.
4. The City does not need another park; it is not currently doing a good job of maintaining those it has.
5. Easy transit access by citizens north and east of the Park & Ride will be lost forever.

► (Lloyd Weatherford) This is an unfair subsidy to a private developer with a public resource. This also will negatively impact future growth in the use of the park & ride. Why should we give away future capacity to a private developer?

► (Bunny Hirschman) I support the Lorig request for a contract rezone on parking. and height. They can go higher as far as I am concerned. I support shared parking with Metro.

Keep pedestrian connections into the retail portion of the property from 5th Ave. NE and NE 100th as much as possible.

Thank you for all of your hard work!

► Why are the buffer width laws not being applied in the South Lot?
Why are the library and community center not Silver LEED certified?
[Writer subsequently added this notation:] (Now planning to be 1st level LEED, maybe Silver.)

Nordheim Court by Lorig is LEED certified. Will they be attempting this with Northgate Commons? [Commentator subsequently added this notation:] (Not certified, but built in that idea.)

How many feet off the creek will be the edge of the townhouses?

Can the walkways that are made for handicap access be semipermeable? Along the creek at least? There is an example at Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center.

If 5th Ave. NE is being made more pedestrian-friendly and re-landscaped, will there be changes in street parking allowance (between 92nd and 100th)?

I will not be able to attend the stakeholder meetings for the next few months because I will be out of the country. Please consider these issues.

- ▶ More P-Patch slots, more than 24 slots. Please do not request less parking spaces from the Seattle City Council. I even think there should be more parking spaces.

- ▶ Good job! This looks good so far. It looks like the creek ends on the west side of the property. How is this going to connect to the drainage pipe coming in on that side? It should be developed as naturally as possible. Am in favor of Lorig getting zoning changes needed to move forward. Love that senior housing is going in there.

- ▶ I was in my 40s when I started going to meetings for Northgate improvements. I'm now 66. Let's get the show on the road.

Comment received via email

- ▶ (LeMoyne Mueller) I attended the March 8, 2005 community meeting and listened with interest to the Lorig presentation. As a person who tends to use busses and walk rather than an auto, and as a person rapidly approaching senordom I found the part of the plan connecting the senior living area to the waterway somewhat frightening on two counts. Firstly the water feature seems to be set up to invite joggers, bikers, in-line skaters and skateboarders all of whom appear to make two dangerous assumptions about pedestrians, that the pedestrian will continue to move forward in a straight line until passed by the faster moving person and that there is NO need to WARN the pedestrian of traffic rapidly approaching from the rear (common courtesy, I would think). Secondly, since this will be an assisted living facility those occupants will not all be steady on their feet and hard of hearing as well, so as it was presented the plans seem to be an accident just waiting to happen.